

COMMISSIONING OF
THE NOAA SHIP
GORDON GUNTER
R336



AUGUST 28, 1998
PASCAGOULA, MISSISSIPPI



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

THE CEREMONY

Today marks a milestone for the Nation, the Department of Commerce, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration with the commissioning of NOAA's newest fisheries research vessel. Steeped in tradition and maritime history, the commissioning ceremony is a significant event in the life of a Government ship. "Commissioning" is unique to Navy, Coast Guard and NOAA vessels. Commissioning marks the moment at which a ship is placed into the active service of the Government. In observing commissioning customs, the national anthem is played while the ensign (U.S. flag), commissioning pennant and union jack are simultaneously raised, immediately followed by the personal flag of the senior official present.

The teamwork and support of Congress, the Department of Commerce and NOAA have made this commissioning possible.

Thank you for coming.

COMMISSIONING CEREMONY

NOAA SHIP GORDON GUNTER

CALL TO ORDER

ARRIVAL OF THE OFFICIAL PARTY

POSTING OF THE COLORS

INVOCATION:

DR. HALBERT SELBY

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF OCEAN SPRINGS

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

COMMISSIONING OF THE SHIP

NATIONAL ANTHEM

ACCEPTANCE OF COMMAND

SETTING OF THE FIRST WATCH

RENDERING OF HONORS

GUEST SPEAKERS:

DR. D. JAMES BAKER

UNDER SECRETARY AND ADMINISTRATOR
FOR OCEANS AND ATMOSPHERE

MR. ROLLAND A. SCHMITTEN

ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR FOR FISHERIES

REAR ADMIRAL WILLIAM L. STUBBLEFIELD

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF NOAA CORPS OPERATIONS

THE HONORABLE WILLIAM M. DALEY

SECRETARY OF COMMERCE

KEYNOTE ADDRESS:

THE HONORABLE TRENT LOTT

U.S. SENATOR, MISSISSIPPI

BENEDICTION:

THE REVEREND CHARLES W. ROBERTS

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, PASCAGOULA

RETIREMENT OF THE COLORS

TOUR OF THE SHIP & RECEPTION

THE SHIP GORDON GUNTER

The NOAA Ship GORDON GUNTER is a modern fisheries research vessel serving NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and is the second largest fisheries research vessel in the United States. The ship's homeport will be located at the NMFS Mississippi Laboratories in Pascagoula, Mississippi. GORDON GUNTER will conduct scientific surveys of the health and abundance of fishery resources and marine mammals primarily in the Gulf of Mexico, Atlantic Ocean and Caribbean Sea.

GORDON GUNTER will assist NMFS in accomplishing its responsibilities for conserving and managing our Nation's living marine resources by collecting data and information on commercial and recreational species of fish, the ocean environment and habitat. GORDON GUNTER is a unique and acoustically quiet research platform useful for the study and observation of marine mammals.

The ship was built in 1990 by Halter Marine, Inc., of Moss Point, Mississippi, as the USNS RELENTLESS, a T-AGOS class vessel designed for military purposes. NOAA acquired the ship from the U.S. Navy and was converted to a fisheries research ship this past spring.

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE MISSISSIPPI LABORATORIES

The Pascagoula Laboratory was established in 1950 with the primary responsibility for exploratory fishing, with emphasis on shrimp, tuna, snapper, and gear development. At that time, fishery resources in the Gulf of Mexico was poorly understood.

In 1980, the Pascagoula and National Fisheries Engineering Laboratories at the John C. Stennis Space Center in Bay St. Louis were combined into the Mississippi Laboratories. The goal was to provide a mix of advanced technology with fishery biology and gear research to address critical problems in fisheries.

The Laboratories' major facilities are located in Pascagoula. NOAA's supporting research vessels, the NOAA Ships GORDON GUNTER and OREGON II, are also docked at this facility.

The Laboratories mission responsibilities include: monitoring abundance, distribution and health of living marine resources and their habitats in the southeast region of the US; development of improved fishing gear and tactics to achieve conservation objectives, develop new fisheries, and enhance operating efficiencies; and, promote technological advancements in fisheries research, management, and use through engineering research and development.

Research at the Laboratory has greatly improved our understanding of the fishery resources in the Gulf. Today, the Gulf supports the largest dollar and volume fisheries in the United States—shrimp and menhaden. Additionally, the Gulf, South Atlantic and Caribbean support the most valuable recreational fisheries.

Dr. Gordon Gunter



Gordon Gunter's career as a marine biologist and leader in marine research and education has spanned more than 60 years. Dr. Gunter was appointed director of the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory in 1955 and served as director until 1971. He continued his association with the Laboratory as professor of zoology and director emeritus until his retirement from active service with the State of Mississippi in 1979 at the age of 70.

A native of Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana, Dr. Gunter earned his B.A. from Louisiana State Normal College and his M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Texas. He has served as a marine biologist with the Texas Game, Fish and Oyster Commission, an instructor in physiology at the University of Texas; a research associate, research scientist, acting director and director of the University of Texas Institute of Marine Science at Port Aransas, zoologist for the Louisiana Department of Conservation, Junior Aquatic Biologist for the Corps of Engineers, visiting professor of Zoology, Marine Laboratory, University of Miami; and Senior Marine Biologist, Scripps Institution of Oceanography. He also worked with the United States Bureau of Fisheries in shrimp and oyster investigations and the commercial oyster industry.

Arriving at Gulf Coast Research Laboratory (GCRL) as it began its eight year, Dr. Gunter moved the marine laboratory from a predominantly summer biological field program to a year-round research facility, and much of the early marine research of the northern Gulf of Mexico occurred under his leadership. Dr. Gunter began his tenure with a staff of one scientist and two part-time support personnel. By the time of his retirement, GCRL programs were conducted by approximately 100 senior scientists, technical staff and support personnel. Major laboratory buildings in use today were constructed during Dr. Gunter's tenure. In 1961 he established and served as the first editor of the Laboratory's journal, *Gulf Research Reports*, focusing on the marine science of the Gulf of Mexico and adjacent waters. *Gulf Research Reports* continues publication today.

Dr. Gunter has published over 250 scientific papers, articles, reviews, and other publications on biological and conservation subjects. His scientific articles are cited in 79 scientific books printed in English, German, Spanish, French and Japanese. He also contributed to his profession through numerous appointments to regional, national, and international committees and advisory panels, edited scientific publications, and continuing memberships in a spectrum of professional scientific societies, including charter membership in the World Mariculture Society. He served as president of that and other societies and academies.

In August 1997, GCRL fisheries biologists presented the American Fisheries Society's half-century membership award to Dr. Gunter at his home. Following the ceremony, a biologist and former employee characterized Dr. Gunter as one of the great naturalists living today. He is interested in every living thing, how each species affects other species, how natural processes affect them, and how everything is connected.

Dr. Gunter and his wife, Frances, reside in Ocean Springs and have five children, Charlotte Wood Evans, Miles Gordon Gunter, Patrick Gunter, Edmund Osbon Gunter, and Harry Allen Gunter.

Secretary William M. Daley

William M. Daley was confirmed by the United States Senate as the 32nd Secretary of Commerce on January 30, 1997. President Clinton said in nominating him, he is "a man of rare effectiveness. He embodies the values of hard work and fair play, faith and family."

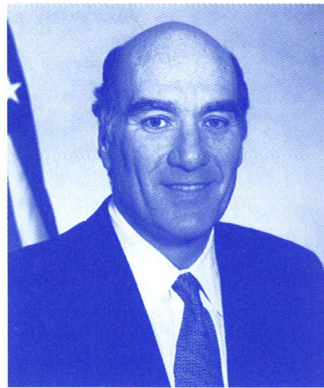
As Secretary, he oversees a Department with 33,000 people and a budget of almost \$5 billion. The Department promotes American businesses, maintains America's economic statistics, conducts the census, issues patents and trademarks, sets industrial standards, conducts oceanic research, and forecasts the weather. In addition, Secretary Daley advises President Clinton on all matters concerning commerce, he is businesses' strong voice in the Cabinet, and a member of the President's economic team.

In Secretary Daley's first year, the Department helped American firms win 60 contracts overseas, worth \$18 billion. Secretary Daley visited 18 countries, and took 100 U.S. executives on business development missions, including the first ever mission for small businesses. He pressed for a landmark agreement signed by 33 other nations that makes bribery of foreign officials a criminal offense. He expanded the trade compliance center and completed opening a nationwide network of 100 centers to help businesses identify export opportunities, as one-third of America's economic growth comes from exporting.

Secretary Daley is helping accelerate the development of high payoff technologies that could spur economic growth; has put an emphasis on expanding opportunities for minority businesses; and is working with the private sector on several issues related to the growing field of electronic commerce. Also, under his leadership, he is modernizing the National Weather Service, which did a better job of predicting El Nino than had ever been done before. This has helped communities and businesses save lives and property.

Believing that the Commerce Department should be run like a business, Secretary Daley holds all positions and programs to a stern test: is it the most efficient and cost-effective way to get the job done? He is the first secretary in 30 years to submit a budget that helps the President of the United States balance the overall budget. In his efforts to modernize the Department, Secretary Daley has revised and streamlined procedures for trade missions, eliminated 100 political positions, and initiated a new security policy. His goal is to perform the best census in America's history in the year 2000.

Secretary Daley holds an LL.B. from John Marshall Law School and a B.A. from Loyola University. Secretary Daley and his wife Loretta have two daughters and a son.



Senator Trent Lott

U.S. Senator Trent Lott of Mississippi is the Senate's 16th Majority Leader, the first Mississippian ever to hold the Senate's top leadership post. His elevation to Majority Leader came on Wednesday, June 12, 1996, 7 1/2 years following his election to the Senate.

A native Mississippian, Senator Lott began his political career in 1968 as Administrative Assistant to U.S. Representative William Colmer, D-Mississippi. He was elected to the House of Representatives in 1972 and served until 1988 when he was elected to the Senate. He was re-elected to a second term in 1994.

The respect shown Senator Lott by his colleagues in both the House and Senate is reflected by the leadership positions to which he has been elected. In 1979, he was elected Chairman of the House Republican Research Committee, the fifth ranking Republican leadership position in the House. In 1980 he was elected Republican Whip, the second ranking Republican leadership position. The first Southerner to be elected to that position, he was re-elected to the post three times.

Senator Lott continued his leadership service as Secretary of the Senate Republican Conference. In 1995, he was elected Senate Majority Whip. Senator Lott is the first person to be elected to the position of Whip in both the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate and is the first Southerner to serve in both posts.

Senator Lott has won the admiration of his constituents with his service to Mississippians. A June 1995 Political/Media Research Inc. poll asked the constituents of 89 sitting Senators (the 11 freshmen were not included) how they rated the job performance of their Senator. Senator Lott received a 75 percent positive rating from Mississippians, earning him the second best constituent ranking in the Senate.

Senator Lott serves on the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee, the Finance Committee, and the Rules Committee.

He was born October 9, 1941, in Grenada County, Mississippi, the son of a share-cropper farmer turned shipyard worker and a school teacher. He received his Bachelor of Science in Public Administration degree in 1963 and his Juris Doctorate in 1967 from the University of Mississippi in Oxford.

He is married to Patricia (Tricia) Thompson Lott, originally of Pascagoula, Mississippi. They have two children Chet, 29 of Lexington, Kentucky, and Tyler, 26, of Jackson, Mississippi.



Dr. D. James Baker

Dr. D. James Baker is Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere at the U.S. Department of Commerce. In this position, he is responsible for the National Weather Service; the National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service; the National Marine Fisheries Service; the National Ocean Service; and the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research. He serves as the United States Commissioner to the International Whaling Commission.



He also serves as the Co-Chairman of the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources of the National Science and Technology Council and as an ex-officio member of the President's Council on Sustainable Development. He is Vice Chairman of the Space Committee of the Gore/Chernomyrdin Commission and Vice Chairman of the Science and Technology Committee of the U.S./South Africa Binational Commission. He is also the Chairman of Coastal America, and he served as Acting Chairman of the Council on Environmental Quality from November 1993 to February 1994.

He was previously President of Joint Oceanographic Institutions Incorporated, Dean of the College of Ocean and Fishery Sciences at the University of Washington, and on the faculties of Harvard University and the University of Rhode Island.

He is author of the book *Planet Earth—The View from Space*, published by Harvard University Press in 1990, and he has written more than 80 articles on climate, oceanography, and space technology issues. He is a fellow of the American Meteorological Society and of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. He has served on numerous advisory committees for the Administration, the National Academy of Sciences, and various international bodies.

Rolland A. Schmitten

For over 30 years, Rolland A. Schmitten has dedicated his entire career to the management of natural resources. He has managed all aspects of natural ecosystems including timber, fish and wildlife. In October 1993, President Clinton appointed him as the Assistant Administrator of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) within NOAA. He oversees the management and conservation of marine fisheries and the protection of marine mammals, sea turtles and coastal fisheries habitats throughout the United States.



Prior to his appointment as the Assistant Administrator, Mr. Schmitten served as the Northwest Regional Director for NMFS for eight years. His jurisdiction covered nine western states and included responsibility for all living marine resource. During this period, he personally directed and enforced the conservation of west coast fisheries stocks,

participated in season settings and closures, participated in international treaty negotiations with Canada, Japan and the Soviet Union, served on state, Federal and international fisheries policy makers. As Regional Director, he received the Department of Commerce Bronze Medal and the Presidential Meritorious Award.

Prior to joining NOAA in 1985, Mr. Schmitten served as the Director of the Washington State Department of Fisheries. He also served as Chief of Policy for all natural resources in the State of Washington. While Chief of Policy, he initiated the cooperative arrangements for management of natural resources between state resource agencies and Northwest Indian tribes.

Mr. Schmitten holds a bachelor of science degree in Forest Management from Washington State University. He is a member of the American Fisheries Society and an associate member of the American Institute of Fisheries Research Biologists. He has written and published popular and technical articles on fishing and fish-related issues.

Rear Admiral William L. Stubblefield, NOAA

Rear Admiral Stubblefield is the Director of the Office of NOAA Corps Operations (NC). This office is responsible for managing NOAA's fleet of research and survey ships, research and mapping aircraft, diving operations, and commissioned personnel in support of NOAA's overall mission of mapping and charting, oceanographic and meteorological research, and fisheries management. Prior to his selection as Director, Admiral Stubblefield served as Deputy Director, NC. Previous assignments within NOAA include: Executive Director for NOAA's Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research; Special Assistant, Office of the Chief Scientist; Commanding Officer of the NOAA Ship SURVEYOR; Chief Scientist for NOAA's Undersea Research Program; Deputy Director for Marine Geology and Geophysics Laboratory at the Atlantic Oceanographic and Meteorological Laboratory. Prior to NOAA, Admiral Stubblefield served 5 years in the U.S. Navy on a minesweeper, an icebreaker, and within the SOSUS network.



Admiral Stubblefield has served as an advisor to the Department of Geology, University of Iowa. He has authored 33 peer-reviewed professional papers, and several abstracts and technical reports. In addition, he has served on numerous technical review panels for the National Science Foundation, National Institutes of Health, National Undersea Research Program, and Sea Grant. While working with the Chief Scientist, he received the Department of Commerce Silver Medal for his accomplishments in assessing the next generation of NOAA's research ships.

Admiral Stubblefield received his Ph.D. from Texas A&M University in geological oceanography, a Master's degree from the University of Iowa, and a B.S. degree from Memphis State University.

THE PLANKOWNERS

The term *plankowner* originates from the early days of sailing ships when sailors slept on deck. Because some planks were softer than others, the sailors would select these softer planks to sleep upon, and in time would regard them as their own. In many cases, when the ship was dismantled, the sailors would lay claim to the planks as mementos of their seagoing days.

The sense of ownership felt by a ship's crew, especially by its commissioning crew, has carried this naval term into the twentieth century. The following are the "plankowners" of the research vessel GORDON GUNTER.

Commissioned Officers

CDR Craig N. McLean, Commanding Officer
LCDR Scott Kuester, Executive Officer
LT Kenneth Baltz, Operations Officer

Deck Officer

Shawn Smith, Third Mate

Engineering Department

Thomas Ballard, Chief Marine Engineer
Sean Pfarrer, First Assistant Engineer
Gregory Rogers, Third Assistant Engineer
Morris Pittman, Junior Engineer

Deck Department

Jerome Taylor, Chief Boatswain (Fisherman)
Timothy Lewis, Lead Fisherman
Eugene Magan, Skilled Fisherman
Todd Wilson, Skilled Fisherman
Thomas Sherman, Fisherman
Anthony Joyner, General Vessel Assistant

Stewards Department

Willie Williams, Chief Steward
Teodorico Obcena, Second Cook

Survey Department

Kimberly Sapp, Survey Technician

Electronics Department

Clovis Thompson, Rotating Electronics Technician
Bruce Stone, Rotating Electronics Technician

*The Officers and Crew of the NOAA Ship GORDON
GUNTER gratefully acknowledge the participation in
today's ceremony of the Navy Junior Reserve Officer
Corps Color Guard, Pascagoula High School, the
New Orleans U.S. Marine Forces Reserve Band, and
the U.S. Coast Guard Station Pascagoula*

